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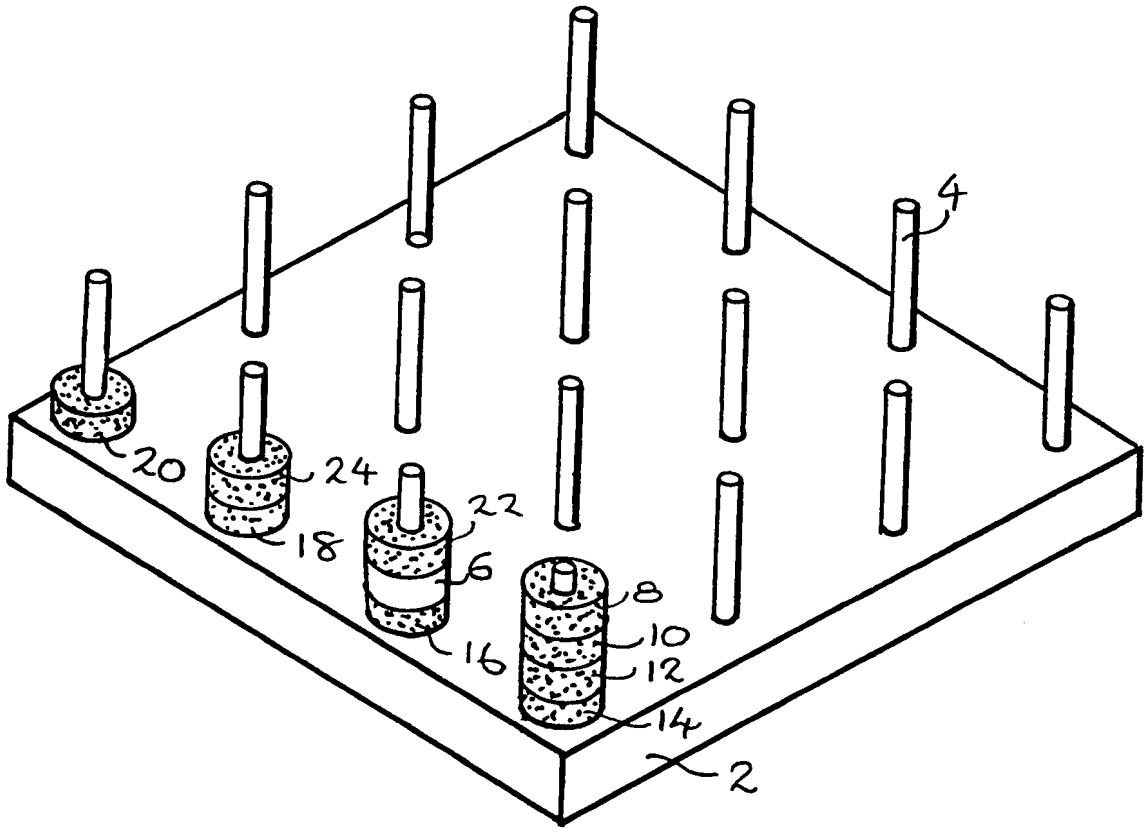
# (54) Apparatus for playing a game

(57) There is disclosed apparatus for playing a game, comprising: means 4 defining an array of X positions, in rows and columns, on each of which positions a plurality n of counters 8 to 24 may be stacked; and a plurality of counters of t different types, there being at least

$$\frac{X \times n}{t}$$ counters of each type.

To play the game, players take turns to place a counter on one of the positions defined in the array. A counter may be placed on any position, eg stacked on top of another counter. Players score by completing a row of n of their own counters in the array.

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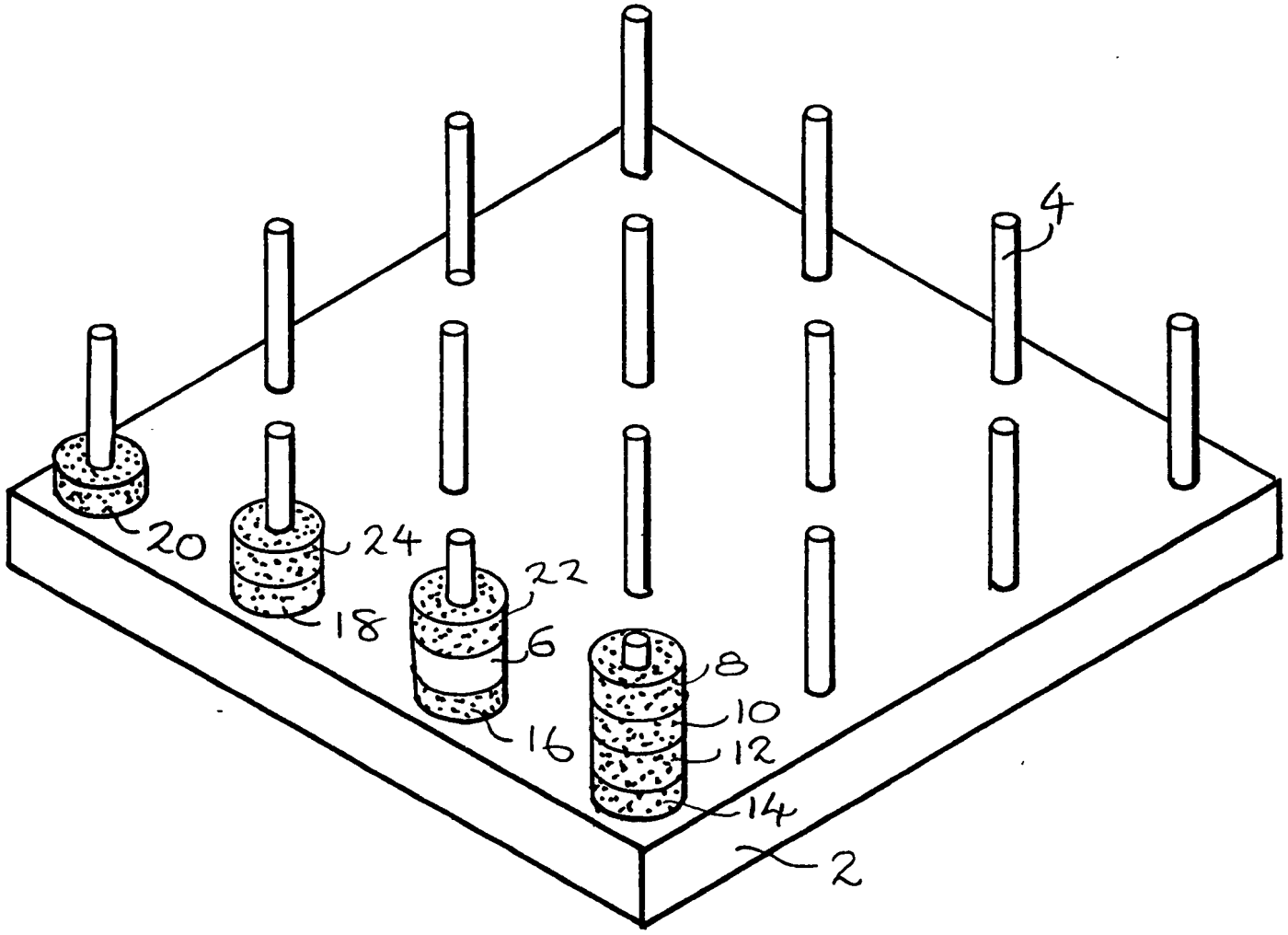
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# APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME

This invention relates to apparatus for playing a game.

In accordance with the invention, there is provided apparatus for playing a game, comprising: means defining an array of X positions, in rows and columns, on each of which positions a plurality n of counters may be stacked; and a plurality N of counters of t different types, there being at least

$$\frac{X \times n}{t}$$ counters of each type.

To play the game, players take turns to place a counter on one of the positions defined in the array. A counter may be placed on any position, eg stacked on top of another counter. Players score by completing a row of n of their own counters in the array. The rows may be vertical in the stack; horizontal on columns, rows or diagonals of the array, but all at the same level; or on diagonals in the vertical plane, ie on ascending or descending levels in the stack from position to position along columns, rows or diagonals of the array. When all the counters have been placed on the array, the winner is the player with the highest number of rows of n of their own counters. A row must be claimed when it is completed, it may not be claimed if it is discovered after the player's turn has ended.

In preferred embodiments of the apparatus the array is a square matrix having from 4 to 6 positions on a side. The number n of counters which may be stacked in each position is preferably 4. The number t of different types of counters is preferably 2. A 4 x 4 matrix with stacks of 4 counters, provides an interesting game for 2 players which lasts about 20 minutes. A 6 x 6 matrix with stacks of 4 counters provides a serious intellectual challenge rivalling chess in complexity and interest.

Preferred embodiments of the invention include means for locating the counters in a stack at each position in the array. The means for locating counters preferably comprises a peg at each position in the array, each counter having a through hole to receive the peg.

One embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawing, which is a perspective view of apparatus for playing a game embodying the invention.

Referring to the drawing, a base board 2 has an array in the form of a 4 x 4 matrix of positions on each of which a plurality of counters may be stacked. The positions are defined by 16 pegs 4. A plurality of counters 6 to are provided each having a central hole to receive the pegs which are tall enough that 4 counters may be stacked in each position. The pegs thus each locate counters in a respective stack. The counters are of two types. Half the counters are one colour (shown white) and half the counters are another colour (shown flecked). In other arrangements, there may be more than two types of counters to accommodate more players. In general if there are X positions in the array, each stack contains n counters and there are t different types of counter, then there must be at least

$$\frac{X \times n}{t}$$ counters of each type.

Only 10 of the 64 counters required for the apparatus illustrated are shown in the drawing.

The players take it in turn to place a counter on the array. They score by completing a row of 4 of their own counters. The rows may be vertical as illustrated by the flecked counters 8, 10, 12 and 14. The rows may be horizontal as illustrated by the flecked counters 14, 16, 18, 20, in which case all the counters have to be at the same level above the base board 2, but the row may be on any row, column or diagonal of the matrix. The rows may also be on a diagonal in the vertical plane as illustrated by the

flecked counters 8, 22, 24 and 20, in which case the row may be on any row, column or diagonal of the matrix.

In other arrangements, the array may be of different sizes, eg 5 x 5 or 6 x 6, or may be rectangular. Different arrangements for stacking the counters may be used, eg the pegs could be replaced by a transparent tube at each position so that counters, which could for example be balls, can be stacked in the tubes. The counters themselves may be formed to facilitate stacking. For example, generally disc-shaped counters (like those illustrated) may each be formed with a spigot on one side and a recess on the other. The base board is then also formed with a recess or spigot in each position in the array, so that by inserting a spigot into recess the counters may be stacked on the positions in the array. Magnets or materials like Velcro (RTM) may also be used to facilitate stacking the counters.

## CLAIMS

1. Apparatus for playing a game, comprising: means defining an array of X positions, in rows and columsn, on each of which positions a plurality n of counters may be stacked; and a plurality N of counters of t different types, there being at least

$$\frac{X \times n}{t}$$ counters of each type.

2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, including means for locating the counters in a stack at each position in the array.

3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the means for locating counters comprises a peg at each position in the array, each counter having a through hole to receive the peg.

4. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the array is a square matrix having from 4 to 6 positions on a side.

5. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the number n of counters which may be stacked in each position is 4.

6. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the number t of different types of counters is 2.

7. Apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the counters of different types are distinguished by different colours.

8. A computer programmed to simulate the apparatus claimed in any preceding claim.

# Attachment for PTO-948 (Rev. 03/01, or earlier)
6/18/01

**The below text replaces the pre-printed text under the heading, "Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes," on the back of the PTO-948 (Rev. 03/01, or earlier) form.**

## INFORMATION ON HOW TO EFFECT DRAWING CHANGES

### 1. Correction of Informalities -- 37 CFR 1.85

New corrected drawings must be filed with the changes incorporated therein. Identifying indicia, if provided, should include the title of the invention, inventor's name, and application number, or docket number (if any) if an application number has not been assigned to the application. If this information is provided, it must be placed on the front of each sheet and centered within the top margin. If corrected drawings are required in a Notice of Allowability (PTOL-37), the new drawings **MUST** be filed within the **THREE MONTH** shortened statutory period set for reply in the Notice of Allowability. Extensions of time may NOT be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) or (b) for filing the corrected drawings after the mailing of a Notice of Allowability. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

### 2. Corrections other than Informalities Noted by Draftsperson on form PTO-948.

All changes to the drawings, other than informalities noted by the Draftsperson, **MUST** be made in the same manner as above except that, normally, a highlighted (preferably red ink) sketch of the changes to be incorporated into the new drawings **MUST** be approved by the examiner before the application will be allowed. No changes will be permitted to be made, other than correction of informalities, unless the examiner has approved the proposed changes.

### Timing of Corrections

Applicant is required to submit the drawing corrections <u>within the time period set in the attached Office communication</u>. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Failure to take corrective action within the set period will result in **ABANDONMENT** of the application.